CITY OF REDMOND
DESIGN REVIEW BOARD
May 17, 2007

NOTE: These minutes are not a full transcription of the meeting. Tapes are available for public review in the Redmond Planning Department.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: David Wobker, Dennis Cope

STAFF PRESENT: Gary Lee, Senior Planner; Kelsey Larson, Assistant Planner

The Design Review Board is appointed by the City Council to make decisions on design issues regarding site planning, building elevations, landscaping, lighting and signage. Decisions are based on the design criteria set forth in the Redmond Community Development Guide. Our procedure is as follows: staff will give a presentation of the project to the board. The applicant then has an opportunity to comment on the project. The speakers should give their name, for the record, and sign the sign-in sheet. After the applicant, others in the audience may comment, either in favor or opposition to the proposal. After all comments are heard, the board will discuss the project openly. They may request comments, or have questions of the applicant. The board members then vote to approve, approve with conditions, or deny the project. If the applicant does not agree with the Design Review Board's decisions, they have the right to appeal, and should contact a technical staff member. The meetings are tape recorded, and the recording will be a part of the crucial record of each case. It is important to identify yourself prior to speaking so that you may be included in the recording.

CALL TO ORDER
The meeting was called to order by Gary Lee, Senior Planner at 7:00 PM.

Because there was no quorum, Gary Lee noted that the group would not be able to approve the minutes or take approval action. David Wobker moved to close the meeting. Dennis Cope seconded the motion. Motion carried with a 2-0 vote.

PRE-APPROVAL
L060503, River Park Project
Description: Mixed use project, 316 housing units, 145 hotel RM hotel, 108, 593 sf office space and 18,800 sf retail
Location: 7805 159th Pl NE
Applicant: Scott MacKay
Staff Contact: Gary Lee

Gary Lee talked about this project, explaining the request to change the exterior materials on the residential buildings, buildings A, B, and E. The developer would like to go over their alternate materials, and wanted to take the time to get the board's opinion. Packets have been passed out explaining what materials were previously approved, and what the developer would like in exchange.

Darcy Gareau, Vice President of Development for River Park, responsible for this project, thanks the board members for their time, and is hoping for some feedback. Garneau explained the material palette is essentially the same in terms of color, finish and texture. He's asking to use a similar material in the entire skin, with a variety of textures and finishes. That material is called Ceraclad, from Japan, manufactured by Panasonic. It has a high recycle content. [lost volume] In some respects, Garneau says it's somewhat better than the materials presented last time, and would help bring the project in on budget. The A and B buildings were originally condominiums and the E building was apartments. The entire project will now be residential apartments for rent.

Scott McKay, design architect with the Scott Group, representing Legacy, and Ray Johnston, Johnston Architects, introduced themselves. Johnston says it's exciting to use this type of material, because you don't have to paint it and it's sustainable and economic. Originally, the larger piece of material on A-B was corrugated metal. The substitute for the corrugated metal on building E is a lighter gray; on A-B, it's a

darker gray. It's about the same shadow-line module as the corrugated metal, and it's being used in the same orientation, vertical vs. horizontal. The boxes on A-B, which before were a wood-like material, will now be a material in texture, with different colors. The product is new on the market here, but it's been around a long time. This market here wants different colors, so the company is scrambling to produce the different colors and different textures. Shouldn't be a problem by the time of installation.

What was entirely brick has been mixed up a bit for economy's sake. Two boxes Johnston referenced cantilever out a little ways, and Johnston didn't want the face material to "jog" back. So, the brick will be retained on the storefront level, up to 20 feet. Above that, the developer is using a different pattern in brick-red colors. The brick will be retained in the base. For the railings in Building E, the initial idea was to use some powder-coated materials for metals, and now the architect is trying to unify all the metals. So, railing systems, canopies, and flashings will use a galvanized metal. It will be a walk-off grate, and it's the predominant material for the interior railings at the Seattle Public Library.

Board members asked about the railings, which the architect tried to show without graphic representation. Johnston explained that the new material allows a view out, but gives some privacy from below. There will be some changes to the tower and retail capability in Building E. In the garage, on the backside, CMU will be used, though it's not delineated clearly. The grid will be the galvanized chain-link, again, bolted on. The developers say the Ceraclad system uses all hidden fasteners, and completely seals from the weather from outside to avoid any leaks. It's also a more "green" product to use.

COMMENTS FROM THE DRB MEMBERS:

David Wobker:

- Very sensitive how the buildings interact with the park.
- Doesn't like the changes.
- The part that directly faces the park, with western sun on it, will looks like huge sheets of particle board or plywood.
- Says he's stunned at this point to come back to this. He compared these elevations to streets in Boston, and townhomes in Boston. This reminds him of his least favorite building in Redmond, Avalon Park Square.
- Only appeal, as a layman, that seems more interesting, is the metal grid that goes horizontal and vertical.
- Says he would be horrified to see a building this tall in such a prominent location in a city park, taking on a texture that looks incredibly cheap.

Dennis Cope:

- Says the elevations are different. Asks if the conditions in this presentation approved at these elevations, which the developers admit is probably an oversight. Johnston said there was some play in the elevation.
- Cope says the window modulation is different. Developers point out the elevations that were approved, and the new image presented is fairly similar.
- Cope says it's significantly different, and says it wasn't correct to come to us tonight to ask for material changes. Many elevations are different.
- Says he doesn't support the elevation changes in the details he's seeing.
- Windows are different, the façade of the west elevation in Building A and B are different. The top floor, which the board thought was exciting, is now flat and unexciting.
- Says it was misleading not to point this out to the board.
- On the materials, Cope says he's supportive of what Wobker is saying. Cope mentions his background, working in Japan, and says the materials are flat and dull.
- Substituting these tiles for wood would be unacceptable to Cope. To substitute chain link for what was previously approved also unacceptable. The board never would have approved chain link.
- Could support the first material, the corrugated, for a tile, if the tile had more depth and releif than it does now.
- The difference between the tile and the brick, in terms of depth and texture, is significant, and that's what's lost in the Japanese tile systems, which are weak in texture and depth.
- Could support the railing system.
- Change in material for the tower, he could support.

- Changing the metal for the garage, he could not support.
- Cope says there's been a great change in elevations and what the city sees, especially in the west elevation, which doesn't believe the board would support at all.

Developer assured board members they weren't trying to pull the wool over anyone's eyes. The understanding of the modulation along the elevation, according to their read from the DRB, is that some modulation would be allowed. Cope responds it was on balconies, not window designs. Window designs were not presented as a problem, and never discussed. Developer talked about keeping the brick on the base of the building because that's what the DRB wanted, not because the developer thinks the material looks cheap. Developer wants to understand how the DRB assists the developer when the building, as approved, is no longer feasible from a cost perspective. He explains the building is $9 million over budget, and if it's not brought in under budget, it won't exist.

Cope says start the DRB process again. Developer says then this plan goes away. Cope says in past meetings, this plan evolved into something acceptable to the board. Cope says the board would not accept the changes in elevation, or the materials change. Developer intends to come back in two weeks. Developer asking for a step in grades in materials, such that building E has more of these materials where least visible, and buildings A and B have more of those materials in the ends where least visible, such that those ends have a closer and higher grade to the imagery shown. Cope says that's a valid approach, and would gain a better audience with the board. Cope says he can be sympathetic to cost issues, but outside faces of the buildings need to preserve as initially presented. Developer says he'll work out the details. He's looking for some accommodation, because when there's a switch from condo to apartment, there's typically a change in grade level, too.

Cope says he understands economics, but says had the project been apartments from the beginning; the DRB would not have approved those materials and elevations. Developer asks what Cope sees as difference between the different panels. Cope says one is wood; one is not. Developer brings up the issue of warranties on the materials. Cope says the question has changed, and wants the messages that wood delivers. Wobker says, as a citizen of Redmond, he doesn't see warmth with the new materials. Developer asks if there's too much of a saturation of color. Cope says richness and warmth are taken out with the new materials. The board embraced the original materials; Cope doesn't believe the larger board would be more receptive than what's being said tonight. The idea of using money more selectively would be a good approach, gaining board support most likely, and definitely Cope's support. Developer says thanks and leaves.

PRE-APPLICATION
PRE070035, Victoria Center
Description: Retail Complex
Location:
Applicant:
Staff Contact: Gary Lee

Gary Lee explains this is a complete re-development of Victoria Center, from the ground up. This is the first time the board will see this. Designer was here from California. From the planning perspective, setbacks, etc., are all met. The issue is whether is the proposed design is compatible with the location in Redmond.

Brian Heberling, owner, began a presentation. Says this is a larger-scale project than what was first envisioned. The triangular gas station property on the end has been procured; it's now gone from that location. Says it's a ground-breaking design and architecture for the city.

Frank Escher, Principal from Escher Gunewardena Architecture. He has been to the board before, and won't give an overview of the firm. Says he's familiar with the site.

Robbie Gunewardena, architect from Escher Gunewardena began a presentation, started by looking at other shopping centers his group has looked at for inspiration and information. Using a slide show, he started with the Quincy Market, in Boston, which the board knows. Alexander Paris built in 1824. He

covered passages, a precursor to current malls. The Galleria in Milan, the first large-scale mega-mall involving two streets covered over with a glass roof. Early department stores in Paris at the turn of the century allowed some layering. The Champs-Elysees in Paris shows the scale of a five-story building and the vitality a shopping street can have. Locally, the Seattle Public Library shows an example for transparency in architecture projects. John Nouvelle's museum in Paris is another example of a large building that responds well to different facades, using sunscreens, storefronts, signage, and a living wall, where vegetation is grown up as part of the building. Rem Koolhaas' Prada store in New York shows, again, the vertical layering of programmatic uses. The Prada store in Los Angeles, on a smaller lot, draws in the public. The Prada store in Tokyo shows transparency, plus how a store can activate a neighborhood. Norman Foster's office building, playing off the street activity, is another concept. Two other Paris stores mentioned. The Selfridge's [sp] Shopping Center in England was mentioned as a store that revitalized a run-down part of the city. Locally, Bellevue Square's transparency activates the street. These projects were used as reference and inspiration for the project, illustrating historical and current developments in architecture, mostly in pedestrian-oriented neighborhoods.

The elements the architects identified that made the projects successful include transparency, which adds to the street life during the day at night. Secondly, interesting materials, textures, patterns, and graphics all create stimulating experiences for passengers and motorists. Thirdly, and most importantly for the architects was that the projects offered a new language of forms and materials, adding vitality to the city. Variety and a departure from the sameness of the surrounding awakens the viewers and can revive a neighborhood. Seattle's Public Library is a prime example. Librarians there say the library has never been fuller. In cities like Birmingham, Bilbao, and Pittsburgh, a great piece of architecture has attracted people to the project and the surrounding neighborhood. The architects believe there's a large, affluent base of young people working in Redmond, and some are spending money in Redmond, but some spend it elsewhere, like Bellevue or Seattle. The idea is to create something exciting as the entry into Redmond, and without the Old Town designation, there's the ability to make a fresh statement to reshape the identity of that block.

Frank Escher continued, saying that the site is interesting, challenging, important, and difficult. Wedged between the two streets involved, parking is a big issue. The most important thing would be to solve the parking problem without detracting from the architecture of the building. The water table is too high to put a garage underground. An entrance for cars from Redmond and Cleveland will go to the back, then up a ramp to create a parking spiral up to the top. That allowed more of the ground level free. Pedestrian circulation on the ground level is on the sidewalk. The building is separated into two with a covered plaza, connected Redmond to Cleveland. The plaza also connects up to the second level, via staircase. That creates internal pedestrian circulation with the shops at the perimeter. The parking is laid out to maximize the legal boundaries allowed. The space is a big triangle, which means parking around that space, creating an enormous atrium. Pedestrians will go down to the lower level with natural light coming down, passing by a living wall, a garden along the walls.

On the outside, the architects wanted to create layers. The top layer is the parking, covered on the north side with a screen, and with plantings. On the south side, it would be covered with photovoltaic cells set in a pattern of different colors to make a visual statement and hide the parking area as a distinct layer atop the building. The front section of the project has a two-story retail facility. Above that are offices that are accessed via elevator and stairs. The façade would be covered with glass and metal screens to protect the building from heat exposure, but would also offer a sense of privacy to the offices.

The elevation formula was determined using a modulation formula, with a minimum of one foot, and at least five feet wide. That could have been translated into a bay window, but the same formula could also produce a faceted wall, which is what the architects want to do, to capture light and create a more interesting visual experience for passers-by. The material for the structure would be poured-in-place concrete. Preliminary cost considerations show that would be feasible, and would create a solid structure. The building is supposed to be a high-end retail area, so it's important to finish it to look like that. Much care will be given to the final selection of materials. The vertical masses will involve some sort of masonry, perhaps concrete with a special treatment.

The uppermost level has parking, elevators, and a stairway that cascades down through an atrium. The third level would have a store two stories high. The next level down would connect to the interior circulation. All the retail would be on the exterior façade; the circulation is on the inside. The stairs lead down to a covered plaza that connects Redmond to Cleveland, the center of the development project. A café would work well in that space. Pedestrian circulation would be important to have on the outside. The north façade would have a planted trellis screening the parking. The south side would have the office wrapping around the outside to meet up with the garage.

Gunewardena explained that the architects are considering green screens to be used on the parking levels, such that there would be planters on the lower levels of parking. The north façade would hopefully be covered with vines, at some point. Such a screen allows for privacy on the office level facing the intersection. Gunewardena showed how photovoltaic cells have been used as screen in other buildings, in various shapes. An artist could develop a pattern for the cells on the south side of the building. Green elements could be introduced, including planters or green roof areas. A developer in San Francisco, famous for such green projects, could be consulted. Escher spoke of the green screen idea for the parking area, and suggested a dense planting pattern to achieve green coverage in a short period of time, not the usual three or four years it can sometimes take.

Dennis Cope read Bob Hall's fax from Pacific Rim to Steve Fischer. From the fax: "My comments, number one, strong support for innovations concept for high-profile triangular site and important corner. Number two, I like the concept of parking and office over retail, but wonder if this project will 'pencil out' as an investment? Good plan. Number three, I feel the design could benefit from a more background building approach, less tour-de-force acrobatic statement, more simple, minimalist, more neutral colors, focus on budget and constructability [sic]. Number four, would like to see several views of 3-D model (sketch up?) to better understand this geometrically complex building. Design of landscape plaza for usability. Number five, sustainability features? How to counteract negative aspects of vehicular traffic on adjacent busy streets." Architects asked for copy of fax.

COMMENTS FROM THE DRB MEMBERS:

David Wobker:

- Thanked architects for the model, and asked if photovoltaic cells would generate electricity.
- Architects responded yes, and are designing building to be green-certified.
- Target level is silver.
- Architects say they're very involved in sustainability projects. Say they've been selected by Dwell magazine to design Dwell House 2, which is all about sustainability. They've done a lot of research for making residential and commercial projects "green." Architects have started to discuss project with Dr. John Ingersall, who works with the U.S. Department of Energy. The screen the architects discussed could possibly sustain the building with the power it generates. The atrium would help with energy conservation by minimizing air conditioning use. Harvesting rainwater might be a possibility too.
- Wobker didn't like the look of the picture, said it wasn't very attractive. Did like the look of the area on top, and says it would make sense with its proximity to Anderson Park.
- Staff has concerns about the style of the building, which is not anything like Redmond, but says it's exciting and interesting, and appreciates its uniqueness.
- Wobker likes the idea of the garden and green areas on top, even though he's a traditional Redmond resident.

Dennis Cope:

- He likes a lot about the project, glad it's out of the Old Town District.
- Questions some of the images, which are in highly pedestrian areas. Doesn't believe this spot would be in a highly pedestrian area.
- So the question is how to get the tenants into this area?
- Architects answer that the boldness of the building, and its attractiveness, will come from the anchor tenant. This is such a predominant space, it should attract a lot of people.
- Architects agree it's not a pedestrian area right now, points out that some one-way streets in the area can complicate traffic in the area.

- Architects say this area is evolving for the better.
- Cope agrees more development is coming in that could sustain more pedestrians, but says it will be a challenge.
- Architects say they took their cues from long-range plans for Redmond, which Cope agreed with.
- Cope says the streets and complexity of the site render good architecture, and the boldness of the building would fit in well in this location.
- Cope says there's support on the board, at least the three members present, for the project.
- Green roof looks great, but it's also a great opportunity to make that roof not just a passive spot, but a place for a café, possibly, too.
- Would like to add more volume, or possibly less to the front. That could mean a portal, or something two-story, to make a grander entry, markedly different, without sacrificing room for tenants.
- Didn't understand the tripartite glass issue.
- Architects explained each level would have its own zigzag, such that one would be able to read with shadows. The office levels would read as one because of the treatment with that. The idea was to create a decorative collar with the photovoltaic cells around the top of the building.
- Cope argues that two floors don't make a tripartite, though he says he's not pushing it. He notes that if it's not going to be a tripartite, it shouldn't be called that.
- Architects say they're taking a liberal translation of the tripartite idea.
- Cope likes the vertical garden, especially its depth, texture, and different colors. He said it would be tough to create a two-story green wall.
- Cope says the green wall could be expensive, but suggests looking at different variety of climbing vines to add texture, perhaps adding a flowering vine. Wants to put enough texture in green wall to make it interesting, not just put in green ivy. Says such variety could happen without much strain on the budget.
- Cope says the idea of having a sprinkling of nice looking buildings in town is a good one, and a good-looking building in this area gets his support.
- Cope says keep up the good work, and offers his support.
- Cope says photovoltaic cells can be very interesting with variety.
- Architects say they're looking into different designs for the cells.
- Cope says having the functionality of photovoltaic cells, with the involvement of an artist, could be great.
- Architects bring up the idea of a French artist that floated the cells, which looked like a mobile.
- Cope says that wall could very artistic, but would need to be executed properly.
- Architects say one of the things that helped sell this is the Crate & Barrel building at Bellevue Square, as a good model.

Gary Lee:

- Asked if the setback of the building was more than 14 feet?
- Architects say it's always at least 14 feet, all the way up. Before, they were cantilevering into that; now, they've revised that.
- Lee says it will be better without the cantilevering.
- Lee asks question of how much cantilevering is usually allowed, points to upper deck of the parking wall, which doesn't modulate at all.
- Architects points out between the first and second level, there's an overhang that covers the storefront, except for the anchor store.
- Architects say up at the parking level, restrictions are tight, so the façade must be exact, within 12 inches. It can't be deeper, or else cars can't get up there.
- Lee asks, in terms of architectural projections, if the board should allow the entire floor and the wall and the face of the building to extend out?
- Architecture points out the project might look better with that extension.
- Architecture notes the cells could be angled, or vines could have greater depth to give texture.
- Cope points out that if the architects were improving their design by adding cantilevers, he could be convinced.
- Lee says overhangs could work decently, because now, they're more than 20 feet above the sidewalk.
- Architect says he's asking for 14 feet plus on the ground floor, with four to five feet additional possible.

- Architect points out there's always at least a 48" rain cover in this project, except for the anchor store.

Both sides thanked each other for their time. Cope would like to do the project this time, and says third time's a charm. Board and architects agree this could be a big step, and the group laughs over if there's a limit to how many times they can see each other on this project.

ADJOURNMENT

IT WAS MOVED BY MR. WOBKER AND SECONDED BY MR. COPE TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 8:36 PM. MOTION CARRIED (2-0).

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MINUTES APPROVED ON RECORDING SECRETARY